

Northeastern Indiana Wetland/Grassland Restoration Program



This program provides technical and financial assistance to help you restore wetlands & grasslands on your property.

What Types of Areas Can Be Restored as Wetlands?

In northeastern Indiana, many of our historical wetlands were depressional areas that were drained with drainage ditches, field tile, or modifications to surface drainage. Today, these sites typically show themselves as slow-drying areas in crop fields, pastures, or woodlands.

Many of the beneficial functions of these former wetlands can be restored by plugging drainage ditches, cutting field tile, or creating low levees. The goal of this program is to restore the functional values of the wetland, not to provide deep -water ponds for fishing. Restored wetlands will typical average 1 to 4 feet in depth and will be designed not to interfere with the drainage of neighboring lands. In fact, restoration of wetlands on your property can help reduce potential flooding problems to you and your adjacent landowners.



Program Highlights:

- Voluntary participation
- Landowner retains full ownership
- Landowner retains full rights to control public access
- Nearly 200 projects have been completed in NE Indiana!
- Up to 100% cost-share for wetland & grassland restorations
- Over 430 acres of wetland and 1,270 acres of grassland have been restored in NE Indiana with this program!

What Are Native Grasslands?

Native grasslands are composed of plant species that were found in the region at the time of European settlement. In northeastern Indiana, native grasslands typically include warm season grasses such as big bluestem, indiangrass and switchgrass, and a mixture of forbs such as black-eyed susan, butterflyweed, coneflowers, blazing star, bundle flower, coreopsis, partridge pea, and prairie dock.



In addition to their beauty, native grasses have many benefits, especially when found in association with wetlands. Native grasses have extensive fibrous root systems that hold soil, slow runoff, and control erosion. As such, native grasses serve as a filter strip for water entering a wetland. Native grasses are also important nesting and wintering habitat for many kinds of wildlife, including waterfowl, pheasant, quail, and grassland songbirds.

What Do My Neighbors Say About Wetland Restoration?

Landowners restore wetlands for a number of reasons. Most, however, share a belief that allowing some part of their land to return to its pre-drained state will provide wildlife and water quality benefits beyond just the few acres restored.



"I guess I would say that not only do we have something of beauty, and good habitat, and flood control, the most important thing is that the water is clean and clear when it finally enters the river."

Jerome Sponseller
Kosciusko County

"I feel that the wetlands are being lost in Indiana and all over the world too fast. We're losing important wildlife habitat and other values and this program offers a chance to get some of it back."

Keith Rondot
Whitley County

Who Do I Contact?

Scott Feters

U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service
217 East Bell Dr.
Warsaw, IN 46582
(574) 267-5090

Rick Ward

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Kankakee FWA
4320 West Toto Rd.
North Judson, IN 46366
(574) 896-3999

Jason Wade

Indiana Division of Fish & Wildlife
Roush FWA
517 North Warren Rd.
Huntington, IN 46750
(260) 468-2515



Additional Information May Be Obtained From:

Jeff Kiefer

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Indiana Private Lands Office
620 South Walker Street
Bloomington, IN 47403
(812) 334-4261 Ext. 212

Patrick Mayer

Indiana Division of Fish & Wildlife
Roush FWA
517 N Warren Rd.
Huntington, IN 46750
(260) 468-2706

Michael Sertle

Ducks Unlimited, Inc
510 1/2 Morton St.
Oakland City, IN 47660
(812) 749-3199

Dane Cramer

Ducks Unlimited, Inc
1220 Eisenhower Pl.
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(734) 623-2000



The Northeastern Indiana Wetland/Grassland Restoration Program is a joint venture between The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife, and Ducks Unlimited, Inc. with assistance from other organizations including: Pheasants Forever, Inc., USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and participating Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts